

### **REMARKS**

This paper is being provided in response to the Office Action dated March 2, 2005, for the above-referenced application. Applicant respectfully request consideration of the following remarks.

Applicants thank the Examiner for allowing claim 17 and for the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 6 and 16.

The rejection of claims 1, 2, 4-5, 8-9, 15, 18-20, 22 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 2000-224830 to Fujitani et al. (hereinafter "Fujitani") is hereby traversed in view of the prior submission of a verified translation of the Japanese priority application to which the present application claims priority and which establishes an earliest priority date of the present application the precedes the publication date of the Fujitani reference, as discussed below.

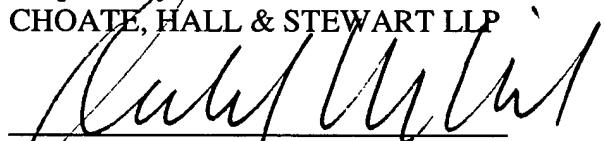
Applicants refer to the verified translation of Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-152065 (hereinafter "the Japanese Priority Application"), to which the above-referenced U.S. patent application claims priority, which was submitted by Applicant along with the Response to Office Action mailed by Applicant on October 22, 2003, and acknowledged by the Examiner in the Office Action dated November 26, 2003. The Japanese Priority Application was filed on May 23, 2000, and supports all of the pending claims of the present U.S. application. (See, for example, pages 1-4; page 9, paragraphs 10 and 11; and page 13, paragraphs 23 and 24 of the verified translation of the Japanese Priority Application.) Accordingly, Applicants respectfully

submit that the verified translation of the Japanese Priority Application entitles the above-referenced application to the filing date of the Japanese Priority Application -- May 23, 2000.

Accordingly, Applicants point out that the earliest prior date of the present application, May 23, 2000, is prior to the August 11, 2000, publication date of the Fujitani reference. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that this reference and the rejection based thereupon should be withdrawn.

Based on the above, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all outstanding rejections and objections. Favorable consideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. Should there be any questions after reviewing this paper, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at 617-248-4038.

Respectfully submitted,  
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